

2.3.5 Glide insertion

Faroese has (or had) extensive glide insertion rules. These insert the glides [j, w, v]²⁴ between two adjacent vowels. Which of these glides occurs depends on the environment, as we will presently see. Glides are also inserted after long /i/ and /u/ in final position.

The rules for inserting the glides between vowels ("breaking the *hiatus*") are these:

- (22)a. If the first vowel is the high, front [i] (or a diphthong ending in [i]), the glide inserted is the high, front [j].
 b. If the first vowel is the high, back [u] (or a diphthong ending in [u]), the glide inserted is the high, back [w].
 c. If the first vowel is a non-high vowel, the glide inserted is [j] before an /i/ and [v] before an /u/. — No glide is inserted after non-high vowels before an /a/.

This can be illustrated in a table form as in (23), where *j*, *w*, *v* indicate the glide inserted in each environment. Since only the vowels /i,u,a/ occur in unstressed position in native Faroese words, they are the only "second vowels" that need to be considered:

(23)	second vowel			some examples:
first vowel:	(phoneme): i u a			
orth.:	phoneme:	glide:		
<i>i, y</i>	i	j j j	<i>sigið, siður, siga</i>	
<i>u</i>	u	w w w	<i>suði, mugu, suða</i>	
<i>í, ý</i>	ui	j j j	<i>mígi, mígur, míga</i>	
<i>ey</i>	ei	j j j	<i>reyði, reyður, reyða</i>	
<i>ei</i>	ai	j j j	<i>reiði, reiður, reiða</i>	
<i>oy</i>	oi	j j j	<i>noyði, royður, royða</i>	
<i>ó</i>	ou	w w w	<i>róði, róðu, Nóa</i>	
<i>ú</i>	uu	w w w	<i>búði, búðu, túa</i>	
<i>e</i>	e	j v —	<i>gleði, legu, gleða</i>	
<i>ø</i>	ø	j v —	<i>løgin, røðu, høgan</i>	
<i>o</i>	o	j v —	<i>togið, smogu, roða</i>	
<i>a, æ</i>	ε [εa:]	j v —	<i>ræði, æðu, glaða</i>	
<i>á</i>	ɔ [ɔa:]	j v —	<i>ráði, fáur, ráða</i>	

As explained in (22), this overview shows that the quality of the second vowel is irrelevant for the type of glide inserted when the first vowel is high (namely /i,u/) or is a diphthong with a high

²⁴ Note that [v] is also inserted by this "glide insertion" rule. But although the voiced labiovelar fricative (or approximant) has developed into a glide in certain contexts, cf. the diphthongal pronunciation of -av- before /n/ in words like *navn* [nau:n] 'name', *Havn* [hau:n], it does not always do so, cf. the pronunciation of words like *nevna* [nevna] 'mention' (although [neuna] and [nevna] are also possible pronunciations, cf. the discussion after the overview in (19) above).

second element (that is, a diphthong ending in [i, u]). Here we get the glide *j* after an unrounded vowel (namely /i/ or a diphthong ending in [i]) but *w* after a rounded one (that is /u/ or a diphthong ending in [u]). When the first vowel is non-high, on the other hand (that is /e, ø, o, æ, ɔ/), the type of glide inserted is determined by the second vowel, giving the glide *j* before the vowel *i*, the glide (or approximant or fricative) *v* before *u* and no glide insertion before *a*. Phonetic transcriptions, glosses and further examples are given in (24).²⁵

(24)a. **with [j] or [w] depending on the quality of the preceding vowel:**

<i>sigið!</i> [si:jɪ]	<i>siður</i> [si:juɪ]	<i>siga</i> [si:ja]
'say(imp.pl.)'	'custom'	'say'
		(also <i>sig!</i> [si:j] 'say (imp.sg.)')
<i>suði</i> [su:wɪ]	<i>mugu</i> [mu:wu]	<i>suða</i> [su:wa]
'whistling(D)'	'must(pl.)'	'whistle'
		(also <i>suð</i> [su:w] 'whistling')
<i>mígi</i> [mɔi:ji]	<i>mígur</i> [mɔi:juɪ]	<i>míga</i> [mɔi:ja]
'piss(1sg.)'	'piss(2,3sg.)'	'piss'
<i>lýði</i> [lui:ji]	<i>lýgur</i> [lui:juɪ]	<i>lýða</i> [luij:a]
'listen(1sg.)'	'lie(2,3sg.)'	listen'
<i>reyði</i> [ɹei:ji]	<i>reyður</i> [ɹei:juɪ]	<i>reyða</i> [ɹei:ja]
'egg yolk'	'red'	'red(Asg.def.)'
<i>reiði</i> [ɹai:ji]	<i>reiður</i> [ɹai:juɪ]	<i>reiða</i> [ɹai:ja]
'anger'	'angry'	'transport on horseback'
<i>noyði</i> [nɔi:ji]	<i>royður</i> [ɹɔi:juɪ]	<i>royða</i> [ɹɔi:ja]
'force(1sg.)'	'blue whale'	'reddish soil'
<i>róði</i> [ɹɔu:wɪ]	<i>róðu</i> [ɹɔu:wu]	<i>Nóa</i> [nɔu:wa]
'rowed(sg.)'	'rowed(pl.)'	'Noah'
<i>búði</i> [bɔu:wɪ]	<i>búðu</i> [bɔu:wu]	<i>túa</i> [tʰɔu:wa]
'lived(sg.)'	'lived(pl.)'	'say <i>tú</i> (and not <i>tygum</i>)'

b. **with [j] and [v] and no glide:**

<i>gleði</i> [ǵle:ji]	<i>legu</i> [le:vɔ]	<i>gleða</i> [ǵle:a]
'pleasure'	'lying(A, etc.)'	'please'
<i>Regin</i> [ɹe:jɪn]	(but also <i>lega</i> [le:va])	'lying'
(a name)		with [v] analogically from <i>legu</i>
<i>løgin</i> [lɔ:jɪn]	<i>røðu</i> [ɹɔ:vɔ]	<i>høgan</i> [hɔ:an]
'odd'	'speech(ADG)'	'high(A)'
		(but also <i>røða</i> [ɹɔ:va] 'speech'
		with [v] analogically from <i>røðu</i>)

²⁵ The position of the quantity mark before the inserted glide rather than after it is determined more by exposition than by exact phonetic detail, since it will obviously be difficult to determine where the quantity lies (which part is being extended, that is).

<i>togið</i> [t ^h o:ji] 'the rope'	<i>smogu</i> [smo:vu] 'passage(Asg)'	<i>roða</i> [ɪo:a] 'make red' (but also <i>smoga</i> [smo:va] 'narrow passage' with [v] analogically from <i>smogu</i>)
<i>ræði</i> [ɪæa:ji] 'authority'	<i>æðu</i> [ɛa:vu] 'eider(ADG)'	<i>glæða</i> [g ^h lɛ:a] 'rise up (of smoke)' (but also <i>æða</i> [ɛa:va] 'eider' with [v] analogically from <i>æðu</i>)
<i>ráði</i> [ɪɔa:ji] 'advice(D)'	<i>fáur</i> [fɔa:vui] 'few'	<i>ráða</i> [ɪɔ:a] 'advise'

As shown here, analogical insertion of [v] between a non-high vowel and /a/ is not uncommon if other forms of the word have [v] before /u/. Thus the noun *røða* 'speech', for instance, has a v-insertion (i.e. [ɪø:va]) because the oblique form *røðu* [ɪø:vui] has [v] inserted before the ending -u, but the verb *røða* 'discuss' has no [v] and is pronounced [rø:a]. The analogical levelling can be interpreted as a sign indicating that the glide insertion is not completely productive or automatic anymore. In that connection it is also interesting to consider dialectal forms where the plural ending of words like *søga* sounds more like -ir than -ur. In these dialects we still get the glide [v] rather than [j] in the plural, namely something like [sø:vli] (or [sø:væi]) rather than *[sø:ji] for the "standard" [sø:vui].

Note that when /æ/ [ɛa:] and /ɔ/ [ɔa:] precede /a/, no glide is inserted but the result of the "expected" [ɛa: + a] and [ɔa: + a] is something like [ɛ:a] and [ɔ:a], respectively. In other words, instead of the diphthongs we get a long e-sound and a long o-sound that are a bit higher than the corresponding elements of the diphthongs ([ɛ:] instead of [ɛ] — and [ɔ:] instead of [ɔ]). This is not surprising since long variants of vowels tend to be higher than their short counterparts. As a result, there is only minimal difference between *gleða* [g^hlɛ:a] 'make glad' and *glæða* [g^hlɛ:a] 'rise up (of smoke)' on the one hand and *roða* [ɪo:a] 'make red' and *ráða* [ɪɔ:a] 'advise' on the other.

In addition to the hiatus-breaking glide insertion just discussed, it should be mentioned that when diphthongs ending in a high front [i] occur in final position, they seem to get an extra j-glide element added to them. Similarly, when diphthongs ending in a high back [u] occur in final position, they acquire an extra w-offglide. This can be illustrated as in (25):²⁶

- (25)a. *líð* [lui:j] 'hillside', *tí* [t^hui:j] 'because', *bý* [bui:j] 'town(A)', *nei* [nai:j] 'no', *leið* [lai:j] 'distance', *seig* [sai:j] 'slid', *moy* [mɔi:j] 'virgin'
b. *ró* [ɪou:w] 'rest', *róð* [ɪou:w] 'rowed', *tú* [t^hu:w] 'you'

2.3.6 Special vowel-consonant combinations — the Faroese Verschärfung

We have already mentioned (in chapter 1) the special phonological developments reflected in combinations like -ógv- and -úgv-. Representative examples are given in (26). Since morpho-

phonemic alternations are involved, we represent the relevant vowel phonemes as /ou/ and /uu/, although that implies an abstract phonological analysis:

- (26) **special combinations:** **pronunciation:** **examples:**
orthogr.: phonemes:
-ógv- /ougv/ [ɛg^hv] *nógv* [nɛg^hv] 'plenty', *rógva* [ɪɛg^hva] 'row' (cf. *róði* [ɪou:wɪ] 'rowed (past)')
-úgv- /uugv/ [ɪg^hv] *rúgva* [ɪɪg^hva] 'pile', *kúgv* [k^hɪg^hv] 'cow' (cf. *kúnni* [k^hɪn:ɪ] 'the cow(D)')

The -ógv-, -úgv-sequences represent in fact a part of a more general phenomenon, the so-called Verschärfung (Far. *skerping*) in Faroese. There are two types of this Verschärfung, the -gv-Verschärfung and the -ggj-Verschärfung.

The -gv-Verschärfung occurs (occurred) between the u-diphthongs, namely ú /uu/ and ó /ou/, on the one hand and a vowel on the other. It also occurs word-finally after these diphthongs (presumably a later development) but not before consonants. Hence we have paradigmatic alternations like the following:

- (27) *rógva* 'row' (Old Norse *róa*),
past: *eg róði* 'rowed(sg.)'; past part. *rógvin*, pl. *rónir*; imp. *rógv!*²⁷
búgva 'live' (Old Norse *búa*),
past: *eg búði* 'lived(sg.)'; past part. (or adj) *búgvinn* 'ready',
pl. *búnir*; imp. *búgv!*
sjógvur 'sea' (Old Norse *sjór*)
Dsg. with the definite article: *á sjónum* 'on the sea'

This Verschärfung does not always occur in compound words, cf. *sjóvarfall* 'tide', *sjóvarmáli* 'outer part of the beach', *bústaður* 'residence', *trúarsamfelag* 'religious community', etc.

Similarly, the -ggj-Verschärfung occurs (or occurred) between the i-diphthongs, namely ey /ei/, í, ý /ui/, *ei* /ai/ and *oy* /oi/, on the one hand and a vowel on the other (the actual phonetic environment is not always transparent because of the spelling, as we will see). It also occurred word-finally but not before consonants. Some paradigmatic alternations are shown in (28):

- (28) *doyggja* 'die' (Old Norse *deyja*),
past: *eg doyði* 'died(sg.)'; 3.sg.pres.: *hann doyr* 'he dies'; imp. *doyggi!*
spýggja 'vomit' (Old Norse *spýja*)
past: *eg spýði* 'vomited(sg.)'; 3.sg.pres.: *hann spýr* 'he vomits'; imp. *spýggi!*
heyggjur 'high, burial mound' (Old Norse *haugr*)
Dsg. w. the definite article: *á heygnum* [hɛi:nun] 'on the high'

Here too the Verschärfung does not always show up in compound words, cf. e.g. *lýveður* 'mild weather' (but *lýggjur* 'warm'), *blyðfrítt* 'lead-free' (but *blyggj* 'lead').

²⁷ The folk tale "Ró nú, Snopprikur" has an old form of the imperative of *rógva* 'row', namely *ró*, which indicates that the Verschärfung in final position may be a later development (cf. Petersen 1993a, 1994a, Matras 1952).

²⁶ Recall also in this connection the previous comment on the gliding of long /e/, o, ø/ in final position.

Finally note that the *i*-diphthongs /ei, ui, ai, oi/ are all monophthongized before *-ggj-* as shown in (29), even though /ui, ai, oi/ are usually not monophthongized when short:

(29) **monophthongization before -ggj-**

spelling:	phonemes:	examples:
<i>ey</i>	/ei/	[ɛ] <i>heyggjur</i> [hɛɣ̥ʒ:ɹ] 'high, burial mound'
<i>i, ý</i>	/ui/	[ʊ] <i>níggju</i> [nuɣ̥ʒ:ʊ] 'nine', <i>nýggjur</i> [nuɣ̥ʒ:ɹ] 'new'
<i>ei</i>	/ai/	[a] <i>reiggja</i> [ɹaɣ̥ʒ:a] 'swing'
<i>oy</i>	/oi/	[ɔ] <i>doyggja</i> [ɔɔɣ̥ʒ:a] 'die'

The Verschärfung-combinations are among the most specific traits of Faroese phonology.

2.4 Consonants

2.4.1 An overview

2.4.1.1 The consonant inventory

The basic characteristics of the Faroese consonant inventory can be summarized as in the following table, based on place and manner of articulation. Note that the first symbol in every case is a phonetic transcription symbol (based on a relatively narrow phonetic transcription, as explained in the comments below the table) but the symbol in parentheses is the most common orthographic representation of the sound (which in most cases gives a fairly good indication of the phonemic oppositions). Note also that most consonants can be either long or short and long consonants are not represented in the table. We have, however, included preaspirated stops and affricates since preaspiration in Faroese is not entirely predictable from quantity relations, as we will see below. Finally, it must be emphasized that many of the consonants represented in this table only occur as positional variants, i.e., the table is not phonemic in any sense of the word.

(30)	bilab/ labdent.	dental/ alveol.	retro- flexed	alveo- palat.	palat.	velar	glottal
1a. aspirated stops	p ^h (p)	t ^h (t)	ʈ (rt)			k ^h (k)	
1b. unaspirated stops	b̥ (b)	ɖ̥ (d)	ɖ̥ (rd)			ɡ̥ (g)	
1c. preaspirated stops	h̥p (p)	h̥t (t)				h̥k (k)	
2a. aspirated affricates				tʃ ^h (k)			
2b. unasp. affricates				ɖʒ (g)			
2c. preaspirated affricates				h̥tʃ (k)			
3a. voiceless fricatives	f (f)	s (s)	ʂ (rs)	ʃ (s)			h (h)
3b. voiced fricatives	v (v)			j (j)			
4a. voiceless nasals	ɱ̥ (m)	ɳ̥ (n)		ɲ̥ (n)	ɳ̥ (n)		
4b. voiced nasals	m (m)	n (n)	ɳ (rn)	ɲ (n)	ɳ (n)		
5a. voiceless laterals		ɭ̥ (l)			ɭ̥ (l)		
5b. voiced laterals		l (l)	ɭ (rl)		ɭ (l)		
6a. voiceless approximants		ɹ̥ (r)	ɻ̥ (rs, rt)				
6b. voiced approximants		ɹ (r)	ɻ (rd)				

Before we look more closely at the distribution of the phonetic variants listed here, and the different phonological rules, it is useful to make a few comments on each type (stops, affricates, fricatives, nasals, etc.).

2.4.1.2 Comments on the stops

The places of articulation for the stop series are relatively straightforward. The retroflexed stops only occur after /r/ and only optionally so (cf. e.g. *hoyrdu* [hɔiɹɖ̥ʊ] or [hɔiɹɖ̥ʊ]) and are thus relatively unimportant (cf. the discussion of the approximants below). The “hard” stops /p,t,k/ are aspirated in initial position whereas the “soft” stops /b,d,g/ are unaspirated. Since the “soft” stops are mostly relatively voiceless in Faroese (see e.g. Rischel 1961, Barnes and Weyhe 1994), this means that the main difference between the two series of stops is one of aspiration. This difference has been expressed in various ways in phonetic transcriptions of Faroese. The “correct” IPA-representation would presumably simply be [p^h, t^h, k^h] for the aspirated series /p,t,k/, and [p, t, k] for the unaspirated and normally voiceless /b,d,g/. That would have meant that the difference between the members of the following minimal pairs would have been represented as shown here: *par* [p^hɛa:ɹ] ‘pair’ vs. *bar* [pɛa:ɹ] ‘carried’; *tala* [t^hɛa:la] ‘speak’ vs. *dala* [tɛa:la] ‘drop’; *kala* [k^hɛa:la] ‘slope’ vs. *gala* [kɛa:la] ‘crow’. This can lead to some confusion for those who are not so familiar with the IPA and may be using a Faroese grammar or dictionary where the symbols [p,t,k] are used for the “hard” (i.e. aspirated) stops (e.g. Lockwood 1977, Rischel 1961, Barnes and Weyhe 1994) or simply be influenced or confused by the spelling. On the other hand, it is also somewhat confusing to use [p,t,k] for the aspirated /p,t,k/ in initial position and also in the sequences /sp,st,sk/ where the stops are not aspirated, and [b,d,g] in general for /b,d,g/, although they are apparently voiceless most of the time. Hence we have opted for the somewhat cumbersome representation [p^h, t^h, k^h] for the “hard” or “fortis” /p,t,k/ when they are aspirated (in particular in initial position) and [b̥, ɖ̥, ɡ̥] for the “soft” series /b,d,g/. This has the virtue of being relatively accurate from a phonetic point of view (the IPA suggests [b̥, ɖ̥, ɡ̥] for voiceless lenes), minimally confusing and not too far from Faroese phonetic tradition (or spelling!). Thus we will use transcriptions like the following: *par* [p^hɛa:ɹ] ‘pair’ vs. *bar* [b̥ɛa:ɹ] ‘carried’; *tala* [t^hɛa:la] ‘speak’ vs. *dala* [ɖ̥ɛa:la] ‘drop’; *kala* [k^hɛa:la] ‘slope’ vs. *gala* [ɡ̥ɛa:la] ‘crow’. Note also that /b,d,g/ can be voiced in Faroese and our transcription system makes it possible for us to represent that and differentiate voiced [b, ɖ, ɡ] from voiceless [b̥, ɖ̥, ɡ̥] when necessary. — Moreover, it should be noted that we follow Barnes and Weyhe (1994) when we transcribe initial /sp-, st-, sk-/ respectively as [sp,st,sk] (rather than, say, [s̥p̥, s̥ɖ̥, s̥ɡ̥]). We also follow most of the Faroese phonetic tradition when we represent the non-aspirated stops after devoiced /l,m,n,r/ as [p,t,k]. Thus we have *verpa* [vɛ̥p̥pa] ‘lay eggs’, *lurta* [lu̥ɹta] ‘listen’, *fólk* [fœ̥lk] ‘people’, *lampa* [lam̥pa] ‘lamp’, etc. (see the discussion of devoicing below). This makes sense since it is /p,t,k/ and not /b,d,g/ that trigger the devoicing. But we also represent stops after other voiceless consonants the same way, like Barnes and Weyhe (1994), although that is not always done traditionally. This gives the following, for instance: *elska* [ɛ̥lska] ‘love’, *hefta* [hɛ̥fta] ‘hobble’, etc.²⁸. — Finally, note that only the “hard” stops /p,t,k/ can be preaspirated and

²⁸ Note that we are assuming here that /p,t,k/ can sometimes be “deaspirated” giving [p,t,k], but in other instances